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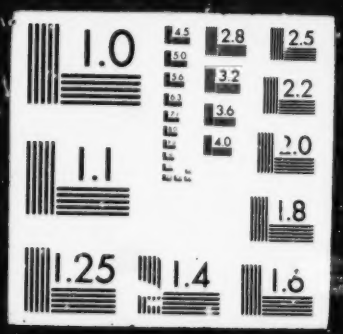

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TETON COUNTY (IDAHO) PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC RECONNAISSANCE AND ESTIMATE OF GROWTH, 1960-2010

Public Health Service
Portland, Oregon

14 December 1962

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WORKING PAPER NO. 39

ENGINEERING BRANCH
COLUMBIA BASIN PROJECT

COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN PROJECT
FOR WATER SUPPLY AND WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

TETON COUNTY (IDAHO)
PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC RECONNAISSANCE
AND ESTIMATE OF GROWTH, 1960-2010

DATE: December 14, 1962

Prepared by RLC

Reviewed by _____

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Public Health Service
Region IX

Division of Water Supply and Pollution Control
Room 570 Pittock Block
Portland 5, Oregon

This working paper contains preliminary data and information primarily intended for internal use by the Columbia River Basin Project staff and cooperating agencies. The material presented in this paper has not been fully evaluated and should not be considered as final.

TETON COUNTY (IDAHO)
PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC RECONNAISSANCE AND ESTIMATE OF GROWTH, 1960-2010

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Prepared by: Economic Studies Group
Water Supply and Pollution
Control Program, Pacific Northwest

December, 1962

TETON COUNTY (IDAHO)
PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC RECONNAISSANCE
AND ESTIMATE OF GROWTH, 1960-2010

SUMMARY

Teton County, Idaho, had a 1960 population of 2,639. The main town of the county, Driggs, contained 824 of these, while two smaller towns contained another 434 persons. The remaining population was largely settled in scattered farms. During the 1950-60 decade, population of the county declined 565 persons, or 17.7 percent.

Agriculture is the principal economic activity of the region, occupying 46.5 percent of the 1960 labor force. Farm consolidation and increased labor productivity in agriculture are the principal reasons for declining population in the area.

A slowing of the trend to farm consolidation, increased diversification in agricultural production, and some increase in irrigation, should slow the decline in agricultural employment in the future.

Based on the assumptions and limitations which are a part of this preliminary economic reconnaissance, the population of Teton County is forecast to be substantially unchanged in 1985 and 2010.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Analysis

This analysis is intended to provide a preliminary estimate of the economic potentials and anticipated growth of the subject area.

B. Definition of the Area

The study area consists of Teton County, Idaho.

C. Study Period

The study period is the 50-year period 1960-2010, with an interim point at 1985.

D. Limitations of This Analysis

Three limitations apply to this study. The first is that it is intended only as a preliminary estimate of the outlook for the subject area's growth. Subsequently, in connection with the Columbia River Basin Project for Water Supply and Water Quality Management, an analysis will be made on an industry-by-industry basis of the growth potential in the various subbasins. At that time this preliminary estimate will be reviewed and revised, if necessary.

The second limitation is that this study is intended for use particularly in assessing future water needs. Emphasis has been placed on the analysis of those industries which make heavy demands upon the water resource. Other industries have been considered only insofar as they may have a significant effect on future population. For this reason, this study is not submitted as a detailed industrial forecast.

The third limitation is one of scope. The study is oriented to a specific project and is intended for sizing purposes. Consideration of interregion relationships at a later date may require modification of conclusions.

II. PRESENT ECONOMIC BASE

A. Population

Population of Teton County, Idaho at April, 1960, and at the 1940 and 1950 censuses is shown in Table I.

TABLE I [a]

Population Trends, Teton County, Idaho

	1940	1950	1960	Change 1940 - 1960	
Driggs	1,040 [b]	941	824	-216	(-20.8%)
Tetonia	250 [b]	232	194	- 56	(-22.4%)
Victor	294	431	240	- 54	(-18.3%)
Total Urban	1,584	1,604	1,258	-326	(-20.6%)
Rural	2,017	1,600	1,381	-636	(-31.5%)
Total County	3,601	3,204	2,639	-962	(-26.7%)

As the table indicates, population of the region has been dropping for some time. In this it follows the national trend toward population concentration in urban areas, and falling numbers of rural inhabitants.

Loss of population has not been even. The three towns in Teton County have lost population at a rate less than half that of the unincorporated area, and as a result their combined totals have come to represent roughly half of the number of the county's inhabitants.

B. Industry

Teton County is almost entirely dependent on agriculture, which in 1960 accounted for about 48 percent of total employment and 81 percent of non-service employment. Table II categorizes major sources of employment in 1950 and 1960.

---

a/ U. S. Census of Population, 1950, 1960.
b/ Estimate for comparison purposes.

TABLE II [a/]

Employment Trends, Teton County, Idaho

	1950	% labor force	1960	% labor force	Change 1950-1960
Agriculture	624	(59.6)	408	(46.5)	-216 (-34.5%)
Forestry & fisheries	3	(.3)	3	(.3)	-0-
Mining	3	(.3)	-0-	-	- 3 -
Construction	41	(3.9)	26	(2.9)	- 15 (- 1.4%)
Mfg: wood products	7	(.7)	12	(1.3)	5 (71.5%)
other durable goods	4	(.4)	-0-	-	- 4 -
food & kindred prdts	12	(1.1)	39	(27.0)	22 (183.0%)
printing	3	(.3)	10	(1.1)	7 (233.0%)
other non-durable	1	(.1)	-0-	-	1 -
Transportation	29	(2.7)	21	(2.4)	- 8 (-36.1%)
Commun. & utilities	11	(1.0)	11	(1.2)	-0-
Wholesale & retail trade	108	(10.3)	106	(12.0)	- 2 (- 1.9%)
Personal & business serv.	52	(4.9)	55	(6.2)	3 (5.8%)
Hospitals	8	(.8)	13	(1.5)	5 (62.5%)
Education	48	(4.6)	92	(10.4)	44 (91.6%)
Other professional serv.	7	(.7)	4	(.4)	- 3 (-42.8%)
Public Administration	23	(2.2)	34	(3.9)	11 (47.8%)
Industry not reported	30	(2.9)	23	(2.6)	- 7 (-23.3%)
Total Employed	1,004	(95.8)	857	(97.2)	-147 (-14.0%)
Unemployed	44	(4.2)	25	(2.8)	
Total Labor Force	1,048	(100.0)	882	(100.0)	-166 (-15.8%)

The drop in agricultural employment, the chief economic activity of the area, was considerably sharper than that for total employment. Some categories of service employment increased in the face of declining population. Food processing employment also rose. (Driggs contains a creamery, a flour mill and a grain mill.) But the decline in agricultural employment was sufficient to over-ride the effects of these factors, and to depress population levels.

a/ U. S. Census of Population, 1950, 1960

Grazing is the major agricultural force in the county, and its relative importance has continued to increase. Diversion of cropland to pasture and increased numbers of milk cows, beef cattle, and sheep have been characteristic of the region. The main crops of the area are grains and hay, though increasing attention to potato culture has occurred with added irrigation and with the growth of market attendant on the rapid expansion of Idaho's potato-processing industry. 1/ In general, changes in the farm economy have been slow, and have taken the path of consolidation of farm ownership, greater productivity per acre and per worker, 2/ additions to meat and dairy herds, and expansion of irrigation, largely through use of ground water on an individual basis. Table III describes the course of major trends in agriculture.

TABLE III a/

Agricultural Trends, Teton County, Idaho

	1949	1959	% Change
No. of farms	459	399	-13.1
Average size of farm (acres)	432	501.2	16.0
Land irrigated (acres)	33, 152	35, 972	8.5
Cropland harvested (acres)	76, 378	67, 188	-12.0
Pasture (acres)	68, 146	84, 517	24.2
Value of crops sold	$1,465, 495	$1,554, 798	6.1
Value of livestock & pdts sold	$1,515, 884 b/	$1,896, 868 b/	18.5

1/ Potato harvest in the county rose from 94,978 cwt in 1954 to 163,810 cwt in 1959.

2/ Grain production of all types in 1959 amounted to about 1,011 bushels on 40.7 thousand acres; in 1954 production was about 1,090 bushels on 46.8 thousand acres.

a/ U. S.Census of Agriculture, 1954; 1959.

b/ Includes dairy products of $340,975 in 1949, $554,735 in 1959.

III. ESTIMATED FUTURE GROWTH

A. Factors Influencing Future Growth

Agriculture is estimated to continue to be the primary pursuit of the area. Although over a third of the county lies in Targhee National Forest, logging conditions do not suggest significant expansion, and saw mills sufficient to handle Eastern Idaho production have developed in other areas. No significant mineral resources are believed to exist in the county. Teton County is located a sufficient distance from major tourist routes to preclude development of such recreational resources as it may have. Development of manufacturing industries is highly unlikely in this thinly-populated rural area, distant from either markets or sources of supply, and with insufficient agricultural output to justify development of appreciable food-processing units.

Three significant factors should produce some modification of the agricultural pattern. (1) Increased irrigation should enable the area to further diversify from the dominant grain cropping pattern. Increased cattle-feeding and potato-culture seem likely; (2) Further development of Idaho potato processing, and eventual growth of a meat-packing industry, seem to offer the conditions for utilizing the potential diversification inherent in irrigation possibilities; (3) Farm consolidation should continue, because of the economies of scale it offers. Its effect on employment should be less severe than in the immediate past, however, because the area is developing a pattern of specialized share cropping, as a result of the existence, side-by-side, of dry-farming and irrigated farming, with their different requirements in technique. A specialized agricultural labor force

is being developed, too, as farms exceed the optimum size for one-family cultivation.

With no non-agricultural sources of growth, and an agricultural development indicating change within the present frame of the industry rather than expansion, service activities are unlikely to change to a material extent. The area economy is not large enough to support a large service segment, and the availability of most services at not too-distant Rigby, Rexburg and Idaho Falls would appear to preclude more than the most modest growth of service industries within the area.

B. Future Population

The economic potentials do not suggest any expansion of population in Teton County, whose population has been dropping since the census of 1940.

On the assumptions that increased irrigation and some diversification of agricultural production will enable farm employment to remain constant, and that the population of the region can adequately support the present level of services, it is forecast for the purposes of this paper that population will be substantially unchanged in 1985 and 2010.